

### AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claim 43 without prejudice, and amend Claims 42, 48, 51, 53, and 55-57 as follows:

- 1-41 (Canceled)
42. (Currently Amended) A ~~pharmaceutical~~ composition comprising a purified and isolated nucleic acid molecule, said nucleic acid molecule encoding a human hepatitis C virus polypeptide having the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3.
43. (Canceled)
44. (Canceled)
45. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 42, wherein the nucleic acid molecule comprises the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 4.
46. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 42, wherein the molecule encodes the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 shown in Figures 4G-4H.
47. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 42, wherein the molecule comprises the nucleic acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 shown in Figures 4A-4F.
48. (Currently Amended) A ~~pharmaceutical~~ composition comprising a purified and isolated nucleic acid molecule, said nucleic acid molecule encoding a human hepatitis C virus polypeptide having the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3, and wherein a portion of said nucleic acid molecule which encodes the structural region of hepatitis C virus has been replaced with a portion of a nucleic acid molecule of a different hepatitis C virus strain that encodes the corresponding structural region.
49. (Withdrawn) The composition according to claim 48, wherein the molecule encodes the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 5 shown in Figures 16G-16H.
50. (Withdrawn) The composition according to claim 48, wherein the molecule comprises the nucleic acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 6 shown in Figures 16A-16F.
51. (Currently Amended) A ~~pharmaceutical~~ composition comprising a purified and isolated nucleic acid molecule, said nucleic acid molecule encoding a human hepatitis C virus polypeptide having the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3, and wherein a portion of the nucleic acid molecule which encodes at least one HCV protein has been replaced with a portion

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of the genome of another hepatitis C virus strain which encodes the corresponding HCV protein.

52. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 51, wherein the HCV protein is selected from the group consisting of: NS3 protease, E1 protein, E2 protein and NS4 protein.
53. (Currently Amended) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a purified and isolated nucleic acid molecule, said nucleic acid molecule encoding a human hepatitis C virus polypeptide having the sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3, wherein a portion of the molecule encoding all or part of an HCV protein has been deleted, and wherein the HCV protein is selected from the group consisting of: P7, NS4B and NS5A proteins.
54. (Canceled)
55. (Currently Amended) A method for inducing an immune response ~~of immunizing an animal against hepatitis C virus~~ comprising the administration to an animal an effective amount of the composition of the pharmaceutical composition of claim 42, 48, 51 or 53 to induce an immune response ~~in an amount effective to induce immunity against hepatitis C virus~~.
56. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 55, wherein the pharmaceutical composition is provided to an animal not infected with a hepatitis C virus prophylactically.
57. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 55, wherein the pharmaceutical composition is provided to an animal infected with a hepatitis C virus.